

THE LABOUR ORGANISER

No. 153

MARCH, 1934.

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Topics of the Month

WELL done,
London!
Well done, Dur-
ham! Well done,
Glamorgan! Well
done, West Riding!
Well done, Notts!

And well done to our comrades all over the map who put their backs into the County Council elections and reaped the harvest which was waiting to be garnered. And to the others—those who, in spite of *our* advice, of the urgings of the Labour Party and of ample warning, did nothing, we can only say, “look what you missed.” Our claim that the Movement is “back to 1929” is more than justified—the Movement has gone better, and Labour is surging forward to the victory which awaits it. Alone among the great democracies of the world the British working classes are keeping their heads, and they are building up and strengthening the mighty Labour Party which will bring about a revolution indeed, but by peaceful and ordered means.

The great victory in London reflects profound credit upon the organisers. Herbert Morrison comes into his own, but then also there is Hinley Atkinson, and, behind the scenes, Mr. H. Danes; nor must we forget the foundations that were laid and the road to victory that was blazed by R. T. Windle (the present Assistant National Agent) when he was the Organiser for London. There are the women, too; the local organisers, and an army of secretaries and workers who have never worked before as they worked for these elections. Then, in Durham, there is J. W. Foster, of the Durham County Party, to specially mention, besides the Labour Agents of the County who have achieved a result to be proud of. The Durham victory was the most pronounced in the whole country, not excepting London. There were eleven gains

and no losses, making Labour's total 55; when the aldermen are elected the Durham County Council will number 80 Labour members against 19 of the others. The Glamorgan results were particularly gratifying, and so, also, were those of West Riding. Once again—well done!

One of the lessons which emerges is the importance of literature in these contests. London issued one doesn't know how many tens of thousands of a penny pamphlet, “Fifty Points for London Electors.” One wonders how this publication paid, or if it paid, at one penny, for there were 62 pages crammed full of fact, brightly illustrated. And the London Labour Party issued other telling publications. We referred last month to the leaflets issued by the Durham Federation.

The Durham Federation sold 449,200 leaflets to Labour candidates.

Here, then, is some explanation of Durham's famous victory. In Glamorgan the Federation issued some telling leaflets. Indeed it would appear that wherever a central body did the work that might be expected of it in this direction success followed such efforts.

And now a word to the others. As our notes of recent months in these columns indicated we were profoundly dissatisfied at the lassitude shown regarding the County Council elections by some Federations, and many Divisional Labour Parties. Indeed we came up against a Divisional Party with fine opportunities in its area which had never even considered the matter, despite all the circulars from Head Office, till within four days of nominations. Then two seats were hurriedly decided upon for challenge, and one was won by a narrow majority. But in the other, our candidate, though actually nominated, was compelled to withdraw owing to the fact that the

local friends had extensively signed the nomination papers of an Independent. In a number of County Divisions not a single contest took place. How can our friends hope for Parliamentary victory or expect a better day when they are too feeble to challenge the enemy after three years of opportunity for preparation. And many of the unfought seats were not in "backward areas," if one accepts the ordinary meaning of that term. We are inclined to place a new meaning on the phrase "backward areas," for an area seems only to be "backward" when the Party is too slothful or unbusinesslike or lacking in Socialist spirit to seize its chances. In lots of difficult areas Labour made its challenge despite its disadvantages, and, to our comrades there, all honour.

As this issue goes to press, the District Council Elections are in full swing. We have a wider fighting front in these elections than at the County Council Elections, and there is little doubt that the final results will again mark a substantial advance. There is just time for this advice to

be given and heeded: *put out all you know!* The wins at the County Council elections were not gained because of some sudden and adventitious swing-over of the electorate. They were won by hard work, solid electioneering, and by machines that were got ready as if the Parliamentary seat were being fought. And indeed are not these elections but the preliminary canter for the Parliamentary trial of strength? Final victory depends upon the machine being kept bright, and Labour's army is strengthened and enthused every time it fights. Every election means propaganda, and by propaganda we bring conviction. After all, are we not looking forward to a *convinced* electorate and not victory through the swing of the pendulum?

An Agricultural Campaign is shortly to be launched by the Labour Party. A large number of constituencies have been selected to be dealt with during the campaign, and a certain number of central Agricultural Conferences will be held.

The Victory for Socialism Campaign

As we go to press we understand that the "Victory for Socialism" Campaign is now definitely timed to begin on May 1. A series of Mass Conferences is now being arranged with the object of still further arousing interest in the campaign and of enrolling those Parties who have not yet signified their participation in this great movement.

Many Parties are now getting down to immediate preparations for the commencement of the above campaign.

In some places the machinery has already been burnished up and districts have been mapped out with distributors appointed for every street and area.

In the larger number of places the machinery is not yet ready, and in any case the resources in man and woman power of many Parties will be sorely taxed in covering the areas for regular distribution month by month. In such places immediate ward and local Party meetings are

called for, and probably also a canvass of supporters in order to secure the necessary number of workers.

We are of the opinion that considerable advantage will be secured if on the first distribution some explanatory circular is issued and distributed along with the first lot of leaflets. The circular would explain the meaning and objects of the campaign, and could be made to serve two or three useful purposes.

On the opposite page we reproduce a suitable circular which has been introduced by us in some constituencies. Though the draft only contains a place for the name of President and Secretary the name of the candidate might well be added, and even that of other officers of the Party.

A circular of this character should be distinctively printed (or duplicated) preferably on coloured paper. In some cases it is proposed to insert in envelopes for the first distribution.

THE LABOUR PARTY

SECRETARY: THE RT. HON. ARTHUR HENDERSON, M.P.

Victory for Socialism in.....

Labour Party Headquarters,
.....

Dated

Dear Sir or Madam,

Here is something to interest you. Enclosed with this circular is a leaflet issued by the Labour Party in connection with a great nation wide campaign to secure Victory for our Cause at the next General Election. We ask you to read this leaflet carefully.

Next month, and for several months yet, we shall bring you another and a different leaflet, and from these leaflets you will gather more and more of the truth about Labour's policy and objects. You cannot get this from the daily or weekly Press of the country (unless you read the *Daily Herald* and the *New Clarion*), and perhaps you, like others, have serious doubts and many misunderstandings about what Labour stands for.

You will of course realise that the cost and distribution of leaflets like this means a great deal of sacrifice and work on somebody's part. If you are already a Labour supporter we ask you to join the Labour Party, which you may do on applying to the above address or to the distributor who brings you this leaflet. As a member of the Party you can help in the good work, and your moral and material support will bring victory all the sooner.

We would be glad also of volunteers who would be willing to help us in the monthly work of distributing leaflets. If you would be willing to distribute leaflets in certain streets will you please signify this fact on the form below? We should also welcome donations large or small to the special fund which we are raising to carry on this Victory for Socialism Campaign.

Please do not leave things to others. If you would see a better and a happier Britain with a policy of Justice at home and Peace abroad you should take your share in helping to bring these things about through the instrumentality of the Labour Party.

Signed on behalf of the Labour Party,

.....
President.

.....
Secretary.

Please fill in the form below and hand to distributor.

Place X
against
your promise.

I promise to join the Labour Party.

I am willing to help in the work of monthly distribution
of leaflets in my district.

I am willing to give the Labour Party the sum of £ : :
(in one sum or monthly) to help the Victory for
Socialism Campaign.

NAME.....

FULL ADDRESS.....
.....

To The New Secretary

Dear Colleague:

We understand you have just been elected to office. Here, then, is to give you a warm welcome to those who serve the ranks of Labour in this capacity.

You are now a Marshal of the Movement, and these notes are penned to guide you in the task you have undertaken, and in the sure knowledge that if you follow the advice given you will avoid many pitfalls and fulfil your term of office with profit to the Party and credit to yourself.

Notifications.

Notify your appointment immediately to everyone with whom your Party has connections. Especially remember the Head Office, the Regional Organiser, your Federation, other Parties around, and the Trades Unions.

The Late Secretary.

You should interview the late Secretary immediately and secure from him the papers, records and properties of the Party. Arrange to have sent to you any correspondence which may in future be inadvertently sent to the old Secretary.

Party Affairs.

If not thoroughly familiar with the history and doings of your Party in the past it is advisable to read up the Minutes. You should endeavour to make yourself thoroughly familiar with the affairs of the Party, and in particular to get the correct hang of any recent decisions or work in which the Party is engaged.

Party Relationships.

If yours is a Divisional Party you will have many relationships with the Head Office, with affiliated organisations, and possibly with a County Federation of Labour Parties. If yours is a Local Labour Party your principal relationships will be with the Divisional Party to whom your Party is subordinate. You will, however, also have relationships and correspondence with the Head Office.

Many of the following hints are worth studying in all these connections.

Party Rules.

It is important to possess yourself at once of a copy of your Party rules and to study them carefully. If you find the rules are not up-to-date or unsatisfactory in any other respect (they may even be non-existent) make a note of this matter to bring before your Party.

Consultation.

The new Secretary will generally derive benefit from an early consultation with the district organiser of the Labour Party. First get the hang of matters as advised above, and then write the District Organiser for an early interview.

Membership Cards.

Party membership cards are only supplied to and through Divisional Labour Parties. No person is an individual member of the Party who does not possess a national card. A new Divisional Secretary should immediately ascertain that sufficient cards have been obtained from Head Office for the immediate and future needs of the Party. It is folly to under-order as unused cards may be returned.

The D.L.P. Secretary has the task of distributing cards throughout the Division. Don't be content with ascertaining the needs of each Party early in the year, but circularise Local Parties three or four times during the year as to further requirements.

Local Labour Parties receive their cards through the D.L.P. Be sure to get sufficient cards. The manner in which payment is made for the cards to the D.L.P. and arrangements respecting them vary in different Divisions. Note that men's and women's cards are of different kinds, and this should be borne in mind when ordering.

Books of Account.

No books of account are supplied by the Labour Party for the use of Local Parties, but Collectors' Books for entering members' contributions may be obtained from the "Labour Organiser," 107, Dale End, Birmingham, 4 (send for price list).

In most Parties all monies are handed to the Treasurer and all payments are made by him. It is this officer, therefore, who is mostly con-

cerned with books of account. Should any money pass through your hands a cash book, at least, will be necessary. The greatest care should be taken that your accounts are always up-to-date and quite in order.

Correspondence.

The bulk of relevant correspondence received by Local Party Secretaries consists of circulars from the Head Office, apart from what may be called departmental correspondence between the local Secretary and other Secretaries and members in the same division.

It is important to carefully read all Head Office circulars for they may contain matters of considerable importance. It may be sometimes necessary for you to give the gist of certain correspondence, and it is therefore all the more necessary to read each item. Not all correspondence will come up under the heading of "Correspondence" at your meeting, but some items will require to be placed as special items on the agenda. Do not trouble your Party by reading letters of minor importance sent you as Secretary, but at the same time guard against failure to acquaint your Party of any important matters on which you have received communications.

Filing Correspondence.

The affairs of Parties differ so widely that no general rule can be laid down as to how correspondence should be filed. The Secretary is expected always to be able to lay his hands on correspondence relating to certain *subjects*, and some system of filing correspondence is therefore necessary. The simplest system is to procure a few folders and label them as to subjects. Such folders will not take up a great deal of room, and may be conveniently carried to meetings as may be required.

Party Literature.

It is to be hoped that your Party has a Literature Secretary in addition to yourself. If not, send to the Labour Party for a list of recent publications. Every Party should possess a stock of up-to-date literature, and if you have been handed over a lot of out-of-date stuff it would be better in the long run to give this away and to order a new stock.

A few pamphlets will always sell readily at Party meetings apart from opportunities at public meetings.

Stocks may be obtained on sale or return if ordered with reason, but cash purchases give more satisfaction all round. A little profit soon accumulates. The little kitty so formed is best devoted to the purchase of leaflets for free distribution. Address communications to the Publications Department, The Labour Party.

Speakers.

Unless a Propaganda Secretary has been appointed by the Party, it is through you that Speakers will be booked. Parties are often at a loose end for a speaker because booking is left till the last minute, and there is insufficient planning ahead. If a "big" speaker is required it is better to write in ample time to the Propaganda Officer, The Labour Party, giving full particulars as to date, probable size of meeting, willingness to pay expenses, and, if practicable, the possibilities of sharing the latter with a neighbouring Party. Often a little co-operation with a neighbour or with another Party in your Division may result in a speaker being booked for a tour instead of a single meeting.

It will be helpful if you can, in time, collect the names and addresses of suitable speakers within a reasonable radius of your town. Train your Party not to look so much towards the few big speakers as to rely on good meetings with lesser (and sometimes more effective) lights.

Speakers' Notes.

You may not be aware that the Labour Party publish Weekly Notes for Speakers at an annual subscription of 10s. These notes are valuable for local speakers.

Head Office Arrangements.

When writing to Head Office communications on secretarial matters such as those dealing with affiliations, Party annual conference, magistracy, etc., should be addressed to The Secretary. Matters dealing with Party Organisation should be addressed to Mr. G. R. Shepherd, National Agent. Orders for publications should go to the Publications Department, but suggestions regarding literature should be sent to Mr. W. W. Henderson, Press and Publicity Department. Questions concerning Women's Organisation should be addressed to Miss Mary Sutherland, and questions

concerning the League of Youth to Mr. R. T. Windle who, besides being Assistant National Agent is Secretary of the League of Youth Advisory Committee.

Voting Records.

The voting record of the Member for your constituency may be obtained from the Head Office of the Labour Party. This is sometimes very valuable. Enquire for charges.

The "Labour Organiser."

Neither you nor your Executive can afford to do without the hints and information given each month in the "Labour Organiser." This is the only journal in the Movement dealing exclusively with political organisation.

"Party Organisation."

The Labour Party publish a useful booklet entitled "Party Organisation" which is priced at sixpence. This booklet gives you a bird's-eye view of the whole gamut of Labour Party organisation, and explains the working of all departments of your Party.

Scheme of Study.

If you are interested in the study of the law relating to the conduct of elections and the franchise, and desire

to make yourself proficient in these matters you could become a student under the Labour Party scheme for Study and Examination at a cost of 15s. for the course. Apply the Registrar, the Labour Party Scheme for Study and Examination, Transport House. The course of study is spread over 12 months, and besides the subjects mentioned it embraces a course relating to the constitution and rules relating to the Labour Party and Party Organisation.

Finally.

Take your duties seriously. Seek advice from the Party Officers which is always readily given, and let it be your aim to increase by every means at your disposal the activities and power of your Party during your term of office.

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Reviews

The Local Government Act, 1933, by H. Samuels, Barrister-at-Law. Price 12s. 6d. Eyre and Spottiswoode, 6, Great New Street, London, E.C.4.

We are pleased to be able to draw the attention of our readers to the above volume which is indispensable to political agents, organisers, councillors and all others associated with Local Government work.

The Local Government Act, 1933, while primarily a consolidating Act, brought about a large number of changes in the procedure at elections; some important, and some of a minor character. The text books at present in use are therefore obsolete and it is fortunate that those concerned in these matters have now a moderately-priced and comprehensive volume which outlines the changes which have taken place.

The cost of the Local Government Act is 4s. 6d., yet for 12s. 6d. the publishers have produced a volume which not only contains the Act in full, but from which one sees at a glance the whole of the changes which have been brought about. These are enumerated under the headings of "changes in the law"; "changes which have been made for the purpose of securing uniformity" and "changes made for the purpose of removing doubts and ambiguities."

There is a table of matters which are the subject of amendments of the law and there is a table of comparisons showing the sections of previous Acts corresponding to the sections of the 1933 Act. The latter table is particularly valuable for purposes of reference.

We commend this book as an indispensable addition to the agents' book-shelf.

National Conference of Labour Women

The National Conference of Labour Women will this year be held at Cheltenham on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 20th, 21st and 22nd. The Conference will as usual review the year's work of the Labour Party in the interests of women, and its discussions this year will be of special importance. There is every probability of a record attendance.

Every Women's Section is entitled to send delegates, the basis of representation being two delegates for Constituency Women Sections, and one delegate each for Women's Ward Sections. The Conference also includes delegates from national organisations containing women members. The delegate fee is 3s. 6d. per delegate.

Delegates' names must be received at the Head Office of the Labour Party by Monday, May 7th. It is hoped that Constituency Parties will co-operate with the Women Sections in order to secure representation at this important gathering, and that where necessary they will afford the necessary finance.



Women's Month

Our readers are reminded that the month of June is again designated by the Labour Party as "Women's Month." The purpose of Women's Month is, by special effort, to increase the membership of women in the Party, and to emphasise the part of women in politics.

We would remind our readers that Women's Month is not the sole concern of Women's Sections and Central Committees, but each Local

Party should co-operate in publicity, organisation and finance so that special activities with the above objects in view should be indulged in in each constituency.

The activities which are principally associated with Women's Month are (1) County galas with processions, pageants and demonstrations; (2) Special membership campaigns; (3) Special meetings in wards and polling districts for working up the above functions; (4) Garden parties with special efforts to gain new members; (5) Children's fetes, pageants, competitions; (6) picnic fetes with demonstrations; (7) char-a-banc tours with meetings en route; (8) Literature distribution.

Parties and Sections are urged to make early arrangements for the service of women speakers, and the services of the candidates and M.P.'s where available. Labour's rising enthusiasm and spirits should do much to make Women's Month this year a record success throughout the country.

'Ile, Mail

Shouting "Heil," "Hoch" and "Sapristi"

The "Mail" has gone Fascisti
And Rothermere, with vitriolic pen,
Says: "England's youth are blasé;
It's high time they all turned Nazi.
Look at Cromwell, look at Bismarck
—they're the men!"

So, shouting loud "Eurekas"
And brandishing swastikas,
He organises blackshirts just to black-
leg working men.

Then the other stunting paper,
Rather chagrined at this caper,
Searched around for some crusade for
the "Express."

Some popular sensation
To increase the circulation
Which is fading like the Monster of
Loch Ness.

Let's go for the Co-ops.
And we'll kid the private shops
That we're heaven-sent deliverers
crusading for redress.

So we toast, with ringing cheer,
Beaverbrook and Rothermere,
And their daily stunting, hooley
hunting capitalist press.

"JACK CUTTER."

OUR YOUTH PAGE

By W.
ARTHUR
PEACOCK

The recent London County Council elections provided striking evidence of the way in which young people are entering into the work of the Labour Party. Quite a number of those active in the young people's movement were candidates and while all were not successful, each of them put up a fine fight.

The win that will please young Socialists most is that of Paul Williams at East Fulham. An enthusiastic, untiring and energetic worker and propagandist for the Cause, Paul presided over the National Advisory Committee of the League of Youth two years ago and did much useful work. He is widely known in the London movement, while in the provinces, too, he has many friends; while national chairman he spoke at many League demonstrations.

It was Paul Williams who directed the working squads that got the Hoddesdon Youth Hostel fit for occupation. Only those who saw "The Geddings" when the committee viewed the property for the first time and who have seen it since, can really know the enormous amount of hard work that Paul Williams carried out. He had helpers—but always he was showing the example. He is typical of a growing type of young man who is coming into the Party. The movement needs such and must make good use of their enthusiasm, ability and desire for service.

Then at Streatham Frank Beswick put up a good fight in a most difficult constituency. Betty Fraser—wife of the new Editor of "Clarion" polled excellently at Brixton, a seat which ought to be won before long. And Dr. Jeger, one of the Fabian Nursery members, again won his seat on the Council.

The whole of which just shows that the League of Youth is doing its job. Its task is to train young workers for the Party, and how successfully it is doing this the L.C.C. elections have shown. And what is true of London is true of all parts of the country. Our opponents may delight to nourish

the thought that young people are not coming into our movement. But the facts are against them.

Maurice Webb is full of enthusiasm about the meetings he has been holding in all parts of the country. He has doubled the number of branches since the inception of the campaign and to-day there exist no fewer than 440 of them. This is splendid, and all the more so when you know that not a day passes without the number being added to.

"The New Nation," the official League organ is now the only publication to give regular notes concerning the general progress and activities of the League and it is worth while to purchase the same each month. It is a production of which the movement has every cause to be proud. Young Socialists are expressing their opinions upon topical problems month by month, while Harold Laski, Storm Jameson, A. L. Rowse and Rennie Smith are just a few of the well-known Party members who have contributed to recent issues.

John Brown, who is active in the youth movement in Oxford, and a student of Ruskin College, has been successful in finding a publisher to issue a book of his reminiscences. Although still in his twenties, John Brown has had a career of extraordinary interest and his book, which he hopes to complete in the summer vacation, will make interesting reading.

John Brown is not the first League member to have his name on a publisher's list. Walter Greenwood, a member of one of our Lancashire branches wrote recently a novel, "Love on the Dole," which has not only been a great success but has been dramatised and recently broadcast.

In the summer months parties of young Socialists organised by the Clarion Rural Campaign Committee will be again touring the countryside with a propaganda van. This is important work and I hope next month to say more about this.

Reinforcements now appearing

Victory is nigh !

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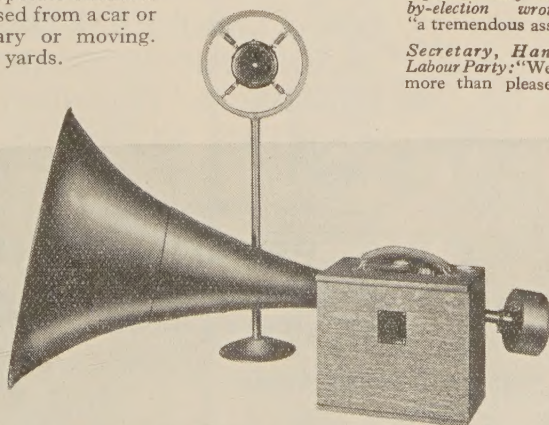
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Safeguarding Local Party Funds and Assets

Our article in last month's "Labour Organiser" on "Frozen Assets" has created not a little interest, and other instances have been brought to our notice of money and properties remaining in the hands of individuals who were at one time officers of now defunct organisations. As we pointed out, in our experience, such properties have generally been handed over promptly on the re-establishment of the organisation, but the question arises by what right are these things demanded.

In one or two instances we, ourselves, have had difficulties in securing old records, minute books, etc., and on one occasion we were met by the statement that the properties belonged to the old Party and when that was called together for winding up the properties would be handed over. This was all very well, for our friend knew that no meeting of the old Party could be called for the simple reason that the Secretary would not act and no one else possessed the list of supposed members.

Chatting to a legal gentleman the other day we understood that the legal position is that when an organisation becomes defunct the properties in law revert to the Crown. This is not a very happy conclusion, particularly where money is involved, and we venture to think that Labour Party rules as they stand can be made to cover eventualities like those we are dealing with.

After all, a Divisional Party is the parent of its local sections and committees as the National E.C. is the parent of all D.L.P.'s. The logical position is, we believe, that all funds in the hands of local organisations are finally vested in the D.L.P., and through them in the National E.C. of the Labour Party.

However, this matter has been well covered by a rule which has been adopted by one or two Parties. We quote here from a rule of the Cheltenham Labour Party which says:—

"The accounts of the Party shall be kept in the form approved by

the Party, and all funds, books or other property in the hands of any Committee or Section shall be, and at all times remain, the property of the Cheltenham Labour Party, and shall be returned to the officers appointed as the Party may direct. On any Committee or Section becoming defunct, or upon the same being expelled or dissolved by the Party, the whole of the property or assets in the hands of such Committee or Section shall be handed over to the Party forthwith."

We think the latter paragraph in particular covers the point at issue, and it certainly expresses what we think has always been the intention. It has the advantage of taking out of the hands of quibblers any excuse they may have for withholding Party properties, and such a rule as this is enforceable at law.

DATED—PRE-1934



**NOW—WE USE
A LOUD-SPEAKER
AND GET 10 TIMES
THE CROWD**

The Conference Habit

By Jack Cutter

The conference habit seems to be spreading in the London Movement and a good habit it is. Its advantages are numerous. It enables us to choose an important subject such as the Unemployment Bill, the 40-hour Week, the Victory for Socialism Campaign, Workers' Control of Industry — the list is almost interminable — then it enables us to choose a speaker who is particularly suited to the subject and can deal with it effectively without any expectation of rhetoric or oratory such as would be expected if the meeting were an ordinary public one with all and sundry invited. Thirdly, it gives a chance for questions and discussions in an atmosphere entirely different and much more conducive of really good results than is usual at a public meeting. Fourthly, it invites delegates and these delegates feel a kind of status and responsibility; they take notes and listen carefully and with concentrated attention. Fifthly, these same delegates report back to their organisations and the subject matter thus reaches a probably wider and more attentive audience than your public meeting allows, and, lastly, by charging a delegation fee the average conference can be run at a profit which is not usually the case with public meetings.

It might be added that Saturday afternoons are usually dead hours for the average Labour Party, but the conference habit has solved the problem of how most usefully to employ them—provided always that you study the fixture card of the local football team and choose one on which the local team is playing far away.

I have found that there is ample scope for this department of our work. Don't overdo it, for a conference every month would kill the value of the thing. One a quarter or so, however, is good business. Our Movement is fortunate in that it can provide any number of experts on any given aspect of our policy. This applies to every district so that your conference leader's expenses need not be heavy. Invariably these experts

are busy men or women, but also invariably, being experts in the line of your conference subject, they are also enthusiasts for that subject and are prepared to make sacrifices to get there.

A danger is that the conference leader, being an enthusiast and a master of his subject, might take up too much of the two hours of the conference. At least half the time should be allocated to questions, discussion and resolutions, so that the "floor" will feel they have been given their chance and the gathering is really a conference and not a lecture.

To this end it is well to plan a time-table and send it out to the leader and on the form inviting the organisations to the conference, and it is equally well to select a chairman who realises that the delegates are present to hear the leader and possibly themselves and do not require, desire, expect or welcome lengthy opinions from him.

And it is also valuable to remember that some T.U. Branches only meet monthly so that the invitations can go out in good time. Conferences give an opportunity, too, to invite non-affiliated branches, Civil Servants' organisations now debarred from close association by Clause 5 of the 1927 Act (and whom, incidentally, we are often inclined to neglect as a consequence), Co-op. Guilds and Political Committees and village Labour Parties in the district who like to feel that they are coming in to the local centre to take part in the deliberations of the wider movement.

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by

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I think I have written enough to show some of the values of local conferences as an addition to our ordinary propaganda work and though I realise that they are purely "inner circle" propaganda, they present a method of specialised education in the details of our policy which I think worth developing fully.

May I add a personal note? The Editor has been kind enough to express a desire for the continuation of these rather hurriedly written notes of mine. I will try to meet his request, but being just an ordinary constituency agent with all the many calls and obligations of such a job, you will appreciate that it is difficult to write to order to colleagues who know as much as, and in cases more than, I about our own job. So if at times these notes bore you throw brickbats and no one will appreciate your criticism more than Jack Cutter.

Is Son of Paid Officer Disqualified?

A correspondent writes:—

"Can you tell me, please, whether a County Councillor would be disqualified if his son took a job under the County Council?"

We have seen this same question presented elsewhere and the reply thereto, though the correspondent's name there given is not the same. We wonder if it is the same case. Our reply is that there is no disqualification of the County Councillor unless the father has such a share or interest in the employment as is contemplated by the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, Section 12 (1). In the generality of cases this would not be so.

This case is, of course, only a passing interest in view of the fact that the Local Government Act comes into force on June 1st, and under that Act the question of interest in the employment (or contract) with the Council would not arise as a disqualification.

It is interesting to note that the limitations of the new Act on a person voting on a question in which he

is interested will apply to the case of married persons living together, the interest of one spouse, if known to the other, being deemed to be also an interest of the other spouse.

Public Meetings Act

A private Member's Bill has been introduced in the House of Commons which seeks to extend to Local Government Elections the provisions of the Public Meetings Act, 1908, which at present only applies to Parliamentary Elections.

Under the provisions of the latter Act a person who, at a lawful public meeting held in a Parliamentary constituency between the issue of the writ and the return, acts in a disorderly manner for the purpose of preventing the transaction of the business for which the meeting was called, is held to be guilty of an illegal practice. The penalty is £5 or imprisonment not exceeding one month.

Our readers will be interested to know that the Act above quoted was very largely the result of a little experience Sir Austen Chamberlain had in his old constituency of East Worcestershire in the summer of 1908. The electors gave him a gruelling and on his return to the House of Commons he very readily assented to a proposal that this measure should be given an agreed passage through the House of Commons.

The Act has largely been a dead letter, and is very rarely invoked. There seems, however, no reason why the protection given to Parliamentary candidates should not be extended to Local Government candidates, though at the same time we think there are more urgent things for the House of Commons to do.

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Some Reports and Balance Sheets

The annual report of the Bristol East D.L.P., accompanied as it is by full statements of the financial position and activities of its offspring organisations, makes interesting reading. Income from members' subscriptions last year showed an increase, the amount received from this source being £239 0s. 7d.—an increase notwithstanding a contraction of membership. Indeed the latter phenomenon was somewhat common last year among progressive Parties due to the fact that the membership push of the previous year was consolidated; in the case of Bristol East a much higher contribution per member was secured, and we may look forward this year to renewed endeavours to increase the numbers. An interesting feature of the accounts is the substantial balances held by the various Ward Committees and Women's and Youths' Sections.

One thousand new members were enrolled last year by the Southampton Labour Party. Membership contributions increased by nearly £80 and the amount of affiliation fees remitted to Headquarters was £53. A total of £300 0s. 4d. was received from members' contributions. We are glad to note that propaganda efforts last year resulted in 109 indoor and 74 outdoor meetings being held; over 10,000 leaflets were given away and a quantity of pamphlets were sold.

Excellent progress was made last year in the Sheffield Central Division. The number of members at the commencement of the year was 1,096. At the close of the year the figure reached 2,379. This effort has been achieved notwithstanding exceptional difficulties, such as the existence of slum areas, and a leakage of electors from the city centre to new housing estates. Income from members' subscriptions reached a total of £260 6s. 10d. No less than 321 indoor and outdoor meetings were held during the year, and 27,000

circulars duplicated in the office were distributed, in addition to 30,000 printed leaflets. Well done, Central Sheffield!

To the Brightside Divisional Labour Party belongs the credit of having duplicated its annual report in a form and get-up which is exceptionally good. Thumping majorities at the Municipal Elections would indicate that here are opportunities for a larger increased membership, and it would appear that the Party is now alive to its chances in this direction.

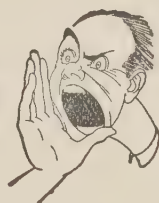
The annual report of the Reading Labour Party is becoming in some senses a national document owing to the variety of activities in which this Party indulges, and the example which it sets to other constituencies in this respect. Membership last year totalled 3,249 — a reduction of seventy-eight members due, however, to the sort of consolidation which we have referred to above, and which, of course, is only preliminary to another big advance. The income from subscriptions, donations and grants during the year totalled £312 19s. 9d., while income from bazaars reached the astonishing total of £558 1s. 8d. There are other large items of income bringing the total receipts over the £2,000 mark. The Party publish the Reading "Citizen," which is one of the oldest-established Labour journals in the country.

From the annual report of the Huddersfield Labour Party we note that pride of place must, this year, be given to the League of Youth, who throughout the year have been indefatigable in various directions. Income from membership reached a total of £132. The Party distributes 10,000 free copies per month of the Huddersfield "Citizen," which, as every practical organiser knows, is a task requiring consistent sacrifice and organising ability.

The Buckingham D.L.P. show a membership for 1933 of 1,700. The accounts of this Party are not yet to hand. This Division is being energetically organised, and from glimpses we have had of the Party's internal affairs considerable ability is being exercised on its behalf.

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The accounts of the Durham Divisional Labour Party are very well printed, and the report contains information of more than ordinary interest, including, as it does, a good deal of matter concerning the social conditions existing in the Division. Affiliation fees to National Headquarters were £18, representing a membership of over 1,000. Those who understand the difficulties of building up a membership in a mining Division will appreciate the merit of this figure. There are two pages in this report giving the names of the public elected representatives for the various local government organisations in the Division—a page enough to make mouths water in areas where such solid success has yet to come.

We have to hand the report and balance sheet of the Acton Ward of the Shoreditch Labour Party. For a Ward Party the sum of £78 12s. 10d. from membership contributions is something to be proud of. We nevertheless hope that this item and the number of members will be surpassed next year.

The reports of several Local Labour Parties in the Llandaff and Barry Division are to hand. Some of these Local Parties operate in isolated and difficult areas, and the reports indicate what can be done in the way of getting members and income where determined comrades set to work in such places. In Barry itself, which is the backbone of the Division, there were 1,268 members last year. The income from same reached £162 9s. 9d.—not a bad income for a Local Labour Party. We note that no fewer than 149 meetings were held last year by this Party and its various committees, apart from public activities.

One does not expect great figures from Divisions like Chippenham, but this struggling Party has, at any rate £68 put by in its Election Fund Account. How much has *your* Party got?

The sum of £150 was collected by the Northampton D.L.P. from members' subscriptions last year. Northampton is on the penny per week system.

Imprisonment

A correspondent writes :—

In the February issue of the "L.O." in dealing with the L.G. Act, 1933, it states in Clause 59 (E) that anyone who has been convicted and imprisoned for a period of not less than three months shall be disqualified for being elected or being a member of a local authority.

We are now dealing with the nominations for Urban, Rural and Parish Council Elections and one of these for an Urban Council is a man who, two years ago, served a sentence of 15 months for an offence.

As the Act does not come into operation until June 1st I should like to know if I am right in assuming that this man will be eligible for election in March but if elected would have to resign on June 1st.

The point raised by our friend is probably one which has exercised the minds of others, though probably not so much in recent years as in the period during the war and immediately afterwards, when imprisonment by no means involved disgrace—as it does not always do even now. Our friend, however, is wrong in his assumption.

The Local Government Act, 1933, is, in the main, a consolidating Act, which re-enacts existing legislation. It also smooths out a number of minor differences in the law relating to Local Government Elections. It does not come into force until June 1st, and when the law is operative qualifications and disqualifications will be uniform for all the classes of elections to which the Act applies.

The Local Government Act, 1894, contains a more sweeping disqualification relating to imprisonment than that which is laid down in the new law, and the candidate enquired of is disqualified for the present elections, to which the Act of 1894 applies. Under the Act in force at the present time *any* period of imprisonment disqualifies; the disqualification applies to a person who has "within five years before his election or since his election been convicted on indictment or summarily of any crime and sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour without the option of a fine or to any greater punishment and has not received a free pardon."

The Loud Speaker Van

And How to Use It

By Jack Cutter

The loud speaker van has become an established part of modern electioneering, whether you like it or not—and you either like it very much or dislike it with an intense hatred.

As I have had considerable experience with this new and sometimes fearsome engine of propaganda, perhaps I may be permitted to write of the lessons one learns in using it and the mistakes it is well to avoid.

The golden rule is "Be Careful." Choose the speaker you are sending out with the utmost care. Remember it seldom follows that the experienced and effective outdoor propagandist is equally effective with the mike. Indeed, these war horses of the soap box (all honour to them) have developed a style and a method of getting their personality over to their audience which almost invariably misses fire over the microphone. Bear in mind that your loud speaker is an impersonal thing. Very few who hear it can see the speaker. The merry quip and witty aside which delights a visible and personal audience at the street corner is a dismal failure through the mike.

It is well to choose a speaker who is good at indoor meetings and has a quiet and telling way of stating facts and making reasoned points. Even he will find he needs practice before he feels at home with his microphone and masters its technique.

You will be well advised to ask him to prepare in writing three alternative speeches of not more than ten minutes each, carefully drawn up so that each word has its full value and each sentence drives home a point. He should be prepared to speak slowly and deliberately, yet without hesitation or mannerisms. The man who says "er" at the end of every sentence is disastrous in front of the microphone. His opening and closing phrases are very important. Avoid the breezy "Hallo there!" style and say quietly and in a conversational tone: "Good afternoon, everyone.

This - is - the - Labour - Party - calling," or something of that kind. In concluding the same words can be repeated.

As every word and sound is magnified the importance of avoiding mannerisms or lengthy pauses, slurred pronunciation or voice distortion cannot be overstressed. People listen to loud speakers under protest at first, but when some phrase strikes their intelligence or sympathy they become quite interested.

Watch the strength of your volume, too. It is folly to take the van into a narrow street with your loud speaker facing a blank wall and have it belching forth on a high voltage with every word "jamming" and blurring and with horrible echoes making your speaker absolutely unintelligible. If it is not convenient in such cases to tone down your volume, stand further away from the mike.

On the other hand if it is a village or open space in a housing estate you can let your volume have its full effect, always avoiding shouting.

It is ten to one that within hearing of your voice there is at least one person on a sick bed. It is kindly and tactical to express a courteous apology to any such—just a few words will do and they may prevent the birth of a grievance.

Some speakers sit inside their van whilst they talk. I think it better—especially if the candidate is the speaker—to come outside and show yourself to the people. The whole contrivance becomes much more personal then and people who come out to listen feel much less self-conscious if they are listening to an actual human being they can see than staring glumly at a closed van listening to what might be a gramophone record for all they know to the contrary.

Thus one of the small microphones which can be held in the hand is best. Another important point is to watch where you stand. Never take your mike in front of your speaker trumpet for it will hiss, echo and "throw back" with ear-splitting results.

I mentioned that the speeches should be short and this is imperative. Ten minutes is the limit. Whatever you do, do not send half a dozen speakers with the van. They will all be tempted to "have a go," forgetting that the largely unseen audience soon tires of hearing the

loud speaker, and becomes irritable if it is protracted too long.

Finally, make sure you approach your chief constable and tell him your plans and, if possible, confine the bulk of your van's work to the afternoons. If you have to use it at nights be careful of your pitches. At all times keep away from hospitals and nursing homes. These are the main points to have in mind before your van goes on tour. Unwisely handled, your van will do more harm than good, but given a "microphone personality" with some intelligence in the use of this medium and your van will be of tremendous service and usefulness.

R.O's Error

A correspondent writes: Can you please tell me whether the following paragraph, which appears in the notice sent out by the returning officer to our candidates complies with the law? I always thought that a candidate and his representative was entitled to attend the proceedings at objections.

"You are entitled to attend such proceedings, either personally or by one other person as your representative, and during my attendance you or your representative (if you desire to be represented) have respectively power to object *in writing* to the nomination of any other candidate at the said election."

The election to which the above matter refers was a County Council Election, for there are no proceedings at objections in the District Council Elections. Our correspondent, too, is quite right in his assumption. The Ballot Act rules which are applied to County Council Elections provide for the presence of the candidate and his representative at objections. We understand that following our advice the matter has been taken up with the returning officer who admits his error.

At the same time we would point out that after June 1st, the proceedings at nominations will be uniform for all Local Government bodies and the procedure for the hearing of objections which at present applies to County Council and Municipal Elections is swept away. Only in Parliamentary Elections will it be possible in the future to lodge objections.

Disqualified as Candidate but Nominated

A correspondent writes us:—

In one of our districts a Communist has been selected to contest the Urban District Council Elections. I understand that he is disqualified because he has been a recipient of Poor Law relief, but notwithstanding he has stated that he intends to let his name go forward as a candidate.

Our local people are anxious to learn whether he can be prevented from standing and whether they can take action other than by way of an election petition. As you will appreciate they are reluctant to face up to the cost involved by a petition.

As I see it they cannot prevent him standing and in the event of him being elected, the Council cannot declare a vacancy if he does not accept office for a period of six months.

I would be glad if you would give me your opinion on this point.

Our correspondent raises a point which is of very general interest, but by no means a new problem. Under the Statutory Rules and Orders governing U.D.C. Elections the returning officer's duties are expressly limited to examining the nomination paper, and deciding whether it has or has not been properly filled up or is invalid on account of a breach of regulations. He is given no jurisdiction over the question of qualification, and no ready remedy is provided if a disqualified person is validly nominated. The only course open to challenge the procedure or the election of a disqualified person if elected, is that of petition—a wholly unsatisfactory position.

Our friend mentions the possibility of a vacancy occurring in the case of the disqualified person becoming elected and neglecting to take the necessary declaration of acceptance of office. There are snags in this. By the way, the declaration must be taken within one month after notice of election (not six months) and non-acceptance of office creates a vacancy. But suppose the person referred to accepts office; he does not incur a

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penalty for disqualification until he acts. Alternatively, suppose he does not accept office and allows another vacancy to occur and then becomes nominated again. We know of no remedy to stop this, except an injunction.

There is, however, one ray of hope. If the person referred to gets elected whether he accepts office or no, he is disqualified, and it is possible for attention to be drawn to the matter on the Council, and for the Council to proceed to a fresh election. The authority for this is the L.G. Act, 1894, Section 46 (7) which lays it down that where a member of a Council becomes disqualified for holding office, the Council shall forthwith declare the office to be vacant and signify the same by notice signed by three members and the Clerk of the Council. The office thereupon becomes vacant.

We are convinced in our view of this matter by the answer to be found in "Justice of the Peace" for March 3rd on a similar case. We quote the question and answer there given.

"A — may be a candidate at the forthcoming election of rural district councillors. He does not reside in any parish within the district, but is tenant of a house in the parish for

which he may seek election. The tenancy did not commence until the 1st June, 1933, and A — is, therefore, not a local government elector appearing on the register of electors at present in force. The furniture in the house is the property of A —, but the house is chiefly used at week-ends. A —'s main place of residence is in a town several miles away. Will you please state if in the event of A — being nominated the nomination paper will be valid?

"Answer. On the facts as stated, A — is not qualified to be elected. But, nevertheless, he may be validly nominated; and the returning officer is not entitled to declare the nomination paper invalid on the ground of want of qualification (*Pritchard v. Mayor, etc., of Bangor* (1888) 13 App. Cas. 241; 52 J.P. 564). For the returning officer's duties in examining the nomination papers, see Article 7 (2) of the Rural District Councillors Election Rules, 1931."

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THE LATE ALDERMAN MISS ADA BROUGHTON.

Tragic Loss to West Bermondsey Labour Movement.

We regret to announce that Alderman Miss Ada Broughton passed away on Thursday, February 22nd, after a short illness following scarlet fever.

Alderman Broughton joined the official staff of the West Bermondsey Labour Movement in 1918, just before the end of the war. She had been an officer of the local Labour Movement for nearly 16 years.

Prior to coming to Bermondsey, Miss Broughton had performed organising work for the Suffrage Movement, and for three years was Chief Organiser for the County of Northumberland British Women's Temperance Association.

She was elected a member of the Bermondsey Borough Council in

November, 1919. Three years later she was made an Alderman of the Council, in which capacity she has continuously served right up to the time of her death.

For many years Alderman Broughton acted as Secretary to the Labour Group on the Council; Secretary of the Bermondsey and Rotherhithe Trades Council and Labour Party, and Secretary of the Women's Section of the West Bermondsey Labour Party.

She was also a member of the Women's Advisory Committee of the London Labour Party, and Assistant to Alderman J. A. W. Douglas, the West Bermondsey Labour Agent and Organiser.

An indefatigable worker, she never spared herself, and gave of her very best to the Labour and Socialist Movement. She made friends with an enormous number of people living in Bermondsey, and will be greatly missed, especially in feminist circles.